

129
GREAT MEETING AT GLOUCESTER.

THE BISHOP OF GLOUCESTER

AND THE

REV. BASIL WILBERFORCE

ON THE

RELATION OF THE CHURCH TO THE TEMPERANCE
QUESTION;

ALSO SPEECHES BY CAPT. KNOX AND S. BOWLY Esq.

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THE

PRESENT POSITION OF THE TEMPERANCE QUESTION

ESPECIALLY IN RELATION TO THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH¹

A Public Meeting was held in the Shirehall, Gloucester, on Monday evening, April 5th, "to consider the Present Position of the Temperance Question, especially in relation to the Christian Church." The room was crowded by a highly-respectable audience, among whom were a large number of ladies. Special interest attached to the demonstration on account of the presence of the Bishop, and of the Rev. Basil Wilberforce, son of the late Bishop Wilberforce, the fame of whose eloquence on the Temperance Question has spread far and wide. The Lord Bishop occupied the chair, and was supported by the Rev. Basil Wilberforce, Mr. S. Bowly, Capt. Knox, Rev. J. Emeris, Mr. Sawyer, barrister-at-law, and others. After singing and prayer,

The CHAIRMAN said: My dear Christian friends, it has been arranged that while some of my valued friends are preparing to put before you much that will profoundly interest you, I should take upon myself the easy duty of a few opening and preliminary remarks. As far as I understand the purpose of this our meeting it must be considered in the form rather of a conference, in which serious people, feeling the greatness of the cause which brings them together, confer among themselves on what would seem best to be done. I will not endeavour to bring before you the greatness of the evil, or the frightful magnitude of the sin; because I feel persuaded that the very presence of every man and woman I see before me is a kind of evidence that it is felt that this sin of intemperance is eating out the core, I will not only say of Christian, but of our national English life. I therefore feel there is no need of dwelling upon the magnitude of the prevailing sin of intemperance; nor do I at all purpose to make any comments on what I fear must be said to be the increasing numbers that are becoming week by week, aye, almost day by day, slaves to this prevailing drink. The numbers, I am afraid, are increasing in what are called our working classes, and those that are called the upper or middle classes are not themselves free from some of the contagion of the national sin. I have no statistics of these things to put before you; I did not care to

collect them; but from many sources very sad comments are borne to one, which would lead to the thought that many that ought to set examples to others are themselves perishing under this sin; that it is most certain that the sin of intemperance is spreading, and that its intensity—this is the point—is frightfully deepening. Of this I will produce two or three illustrations, one of which was sent to me, and one of great importance, not five minutes since. As to the numbers to which I allude, I will only specify one single fact that I noticed in the *Pall Mall Gazette* five days ago. I there see to my amazement that in Scotland last year there was spent fully seven millions sterling in the consumption of whisky. The total gross annual rental of all the lands and heritages of Scotland is eighteen millions, little more than twice as much as the amount spent in whisky by the people. Do not let us speak hardly of Scotland; I fear England would bear by no means a favourable contrast; but I just take figures as I happen to fall upon them which, practised as I am in these dreadful statistics, I confess perfectly astounded me, and this afternoon I copied the figures from the papers lest I should make some mistake. I suppose, therefore that this is quite enough to illustrate the frightful truth that I put before you, that matters are becoming much worse. The second illustration came accidentally before me, and many of you may have seen it in the *Times* two or three days ago. To their great honour, at the Leeds Assizes, the foreman of the grand jury told Mr. Baron Amphlett, the presiding judge, that they had a presentment to make, which I suppose means a solemn and formal statement, and it was in these words:—"The grand jury in concluding their duties, and bearing in mind the observation of his lordship on the increase of crimes of violence, beg respectfully to invite the judge's attention to the fact that nearly all the cases that have come before them where violence has been committed, whether in aggravated assaults, or in the brutal beating of wives, or in the form of licentious outrages, the exciting cause has been strong drink, and the criminals are often shown to have issued from the public-houses or beerhouses in a state (listen to these frightful words) when they had lost reason and self-control. That without offering any opinion on the efficacy of the different kinds of punishment, the grand jury believe that no degree of severity is sufficient to deter the drunkard whose blood is inflamed and his mind maddened by drink, from acts of violence and outrage. And it is therefore in the interest both of the victims and of the perpetrators of these crimes, in short of the whole of the public, that attention should be drawn as well to the exciting cause as to the severer punishment of each offence." (Applause.) This was signed by the foreman of the grand jury, and I may venture to say, reflected the greatest possible honour on those who presented it, and thus enabled speakers like myself to appeal to their distinguished authority. I am glad to mention that we all are receiving assistance from one of our own judges, for this piece of paper has just been put into my hands, and it will be best for me simply to read it. "Mr. Justice Archibald, in summing up a case this afternoon, said 'the miserable vice of intemperance is the cause of one-half of the cases that are brought into a

criminal court; indeed, I am safe in saying that but for intemperance fully two-thirds of the prisoners would not be brought before us.” (Applause.) Now, we require no more illustrations, but may very shortly proceed to our conference. Still let me venture to say that three or four common-place thoughts, or if you like principles, may be just hinted at by the one whom you have been pleased to make your chairman. And one of these is this, that I do not think we can possibly wait for legislation. Legislation may come, and in the most beneficial form; but it is now perfectly idle for us to fold our hands, and say that we trust that the hours during which drinking houses are to be open may be shortened, or that a still more inclusive measure, such as that known as the Permissive Bill—(applause)—may, it is hoped, be passed in spite of what would seem Parliamentary evidence to the contrary. No, my friends, I think we had better make up our minds plainly, that we must wait no longer. Parliamentary and legislative interference we shall joyfully welcome when it comes, but it is clearly no use waiting for it. Nor is it any use waiting for what I for one some years ago had hoped, in the moral influences which moral and Christian people might bring to bear on those around them. Something, no doubt, has been done by efforts of this nature. I believe that the establishment of “British Workmen”—(applause)—has been blessed with very great success. If there were more time at our disposal I could supply you with many illustrative anecdotes of the advantages of these institutions in the neighbouring city of Bristol, and the blessings they bring with them. I do feel that the good they are doing is immense, and I urge on every one whom these words may reach to do everything in your power to forward these institutions, for remember that every one here who has any experience knows this, that the beginning of a downward course is often a half-innocent seeking for society. A poor fellow comes home tired and weary; it may be (for there are such things in the world) he has got a very bad-managing wife, and the house is in confusion; the children are all abroad in it; and the man, who may have a turn for conversation with his fellow-men—why should he not as well as his betters?—the poor fellow, finding nothing at home to detain him, and a great deal to repel him, is tempted to go to the only place such a man often can go to, and resolves that he will have half-a-pint, and no more, and have a bit of gossip round the corner. Many of us know how an evil course may be really traced to such a comparatively innocent beginning; a course ending in sin and degradation may have commenced in no worse way than that which I have mentioned. Is it not, then our duty—those of us who feel the comfort—to use the first word that comes—of interchanging thought with our fellow-men—is it not our duty by all means to provide places where there can be that meeting of man with man, and where that which is supplied will be that which all British Workmen commonly do supply:—soup, good tea, coffee, light newspapers, a few healthy magazines, and the opportunity for cheerful, and I trust, innocent conversation? (Applause.) So I say, support “British Workmen.” But still I come back and say we cannot wait for the

working of these things. We must go on, and seek some principle of action on which we can more certainly rest. Well, now, what is it? It has now become plainer and plainer to me that you can certainly never reclaim the drunkard without the principle of total abstinence. (Applause.) I have been some time arriving at that conclusion; but I have arrived at it on what I think clear and conclusive evidence. One of our most unbiassed medical men, whose name if I were to mention it would call forth responsive cheers, said to me, a few months ago, "My professional experience teaches me that there is no reclaiming the drunkard except by totally cutting off the supply." (Applause.) And I can assure you that opinion, coming from the quarter it did, weighed with me very deeply. However, one's own opinions matter but little. Now, a thought or two more. This total abstinence, as we know, must be in some degree or other openly avowed and confessed. You must set as it were a seal upon it. There must be something of the nature of a solemn pledge. And if I might be so bold as to recommend any form of pledge, I should recommend that one which a very useful and active society I have the pleasure of belonging to, called the Church of England Temperance Society, circulates for the use of her members. I will tell you why I mention that pledge. I did not study its words; I do not know that they are drawn up a bit better than any other pledge; but the last time I had one of the small cards in my hand I turned it over, and saw on the reverse side, a simple, broad, clear prayer to Almighty God in the name of Jesus Christ for strength from above to maintain that which was written on the other side. And that is why I recommend that pledge, because, my dear friends, you do not want a bishop to tell you that the mere pride of the heart in abiding by its own resolution—"I pass my word, and will never do it"—is not enough. And those cases, and they are not few, in which men go backward, and fearfully backward, after a pledge, I humbly believe are cases in which the pledge has not been sanctified by prayer. So there must be a pledge. And now, last of all, comes a very difficult question that will be admirably illustrated by those that follow me, but which I have only time to sketch out in simplest outline. What about those that will have the responsibility of recommending others totally to abstain, and to take a pledge such as I have alluded to? What must be their course? Can they wholly stand apart and say, "I am not tried in the same way as you are; I therefore give you the best possible advice I can, and I recommend you to God," and there stop? No. I think the current and movement of present thought, and it is very important to notice it, does point out that as many of those as can possibly do it—and, mark, are fully persuaded in their own mind—should prepare themselves, cost what it may, to set an example. (Applause.) Now, I should not dare to speak in such a way as this unless I myself for the last few years had been giving up every practice to which I had formerly been accustomed. I suppose I can candidly say that I have not taken a glass of wine for what you may call the pleasure of drinking a glass of wine for perhaps years. (Applause.) What I may still be obliged to do is a matter that must

rest with me and the God who judges me. What I have to be concerned with is simply this, that I swing free of every form of allurements, and that what I may feel necessary to take is in accordance with that which I believe the most enthusiastic of the friends of total abstinence admit to be of some validity—advice given by competent medical advisers. And whensoever I shall hear that a man liable at uncertain moments to deadly faintness, with a feeble pulse, and a weak and perhaps failing heart, and a whole world of overwork—when I hear that such a one can safely and abruptly alter his course, I shall thank God for hearing such a message, and shall be the one to follow it. (Applause.) It would be perfectly easy to me to claim to be a total abstainer; but, my friends, I think it much better to be perfectly straightforward, and not claim to be what, as yet, I am not; and yet to say this with all my heart to any one who is moved to take the pledge—stick to it, whether it is to be in life or death—if you are to die, die, but stick to your pledge. (Applause.) Yes, my friends, with my present habits, it would be easy enough, and perhaps even fair enough for me to proclaim myself a total abstainer, with a kind of medical certificate; but I scorn these things: I would far sooner speak the truth with all Christian plainness and appear only what I am; yet, if I were not what I am, if I were not fully persuaded that we can only do real good by ourselves setting an example, I should not venture to address this great and important meeting; so I do say from the bottom of my heart, “All you who would seek to be a brother’s keeper, and save a brother’s soul, consider this vital question, as to the duty of yourselves setting the example,” a question which I tell you frankly is pressing itself home amid my own difficulties upon me every day. I say, consider these things, and whether you ought not to prepare to be that which many of you are whom I am addressing, total abstainers for love’s sake. And now, dear friends, I must apologise, and become a “total abstainer” from any further speaking, for I have most valuable friends ready who have kindly come to help—one our veteran friend who must always take the first place at meetings of this kind, my friend Mr. Samuel Bowly. (Applause.) And then there is an equally good and true friend of mine on my left, who has taken a long railway journey to address you this evening, the honoured son of a most honoured father. (Applause.) You won’t let me tell you his name, so the only thing, as you appear to know him well, and, I do not doubt, value him as he deserves to be valued, all that is left for me is to present to you Mr. Basil Wilberforce. (Applause.)

Rev. BASIL WILBERFORCE, in the course of a rapid, eloquent, and impassioned speech, said—My lord, ladies, and gentlemen,—I have come a great many miles behind the iron horse to-day to say a few words to you about the temperance question. But I find I have been very well repaid for my trouble, first by seeing such a magnificent room full of those interested in this great movement, and second, by listening to that splendid straightforward speech of your Bishop. I thank him from the bottom of my heart for the words he has been saying, which will be

spread throughout England by the press. We have now got a bishop who has given his episcopal sanction to total abstinence, and has distinctly in so many words advised those who look to him for advice to become total abstainers. You may not be as well aware as I am of the amount of courage it requires for a bishop of the present day to come boldly forward in a manner like this. These are troublous days for bishops, my dear friends. They get pulled to pieces on all sides, and the more they try to do their duty the more they get pulled about. I have been a bishop's chaplain for years, and I know that if a bishop does his duty, he has got to be the bishop of his diocese and not the bishop of a party, and that is why a party always falls foul of him. I am thankful that he is going in one sense to be the bishop of a party—that he is going to be the bishop of the total abstinence party. (Applause.) I will ask you to settle yourselves down to hear a very tiresome tale which I am to speak to you as long as you like—so I shall go on till I see you are tired. First of all I have a very wide subject given me—the temperance movement and the duty of the Christian towards it. First with regard to the temperance movement, let there be no mistake about it; it is rising upward from the working classes of England, and is forcing itself upon the nation. There is not a man or woman in this country who can afford to say that they will have nothing to do with it, because we mean, by God's help, to make them have something to do with it before long. And at the same time the temperance movement is perfectly surrounded with difficulties. There is the social difficulty, the physical difficulty, the moral and religious difficulty; there is custom, and prejudice, and appetite. That is why our leading men are rather afraid of the temperance question. Our politicians do not like it; our ministers do not like it; our bishops as a rule can't bear it; none of our people like it, because wherever it touches it touches some interest. Only consider for a moment the enormous trade-interest the temperance movement comes directly into contact with. Millions and millions of money have been expended in certain ways in doing good. You have a great distiller or brewer restoring a cathedral or building a church, and it is not thought right to point to the evil by which all that money was made, and the leaders of the Church are obliged to look at the man, and some may say this is a trade which does a great deal of good. And so the whole thing is full of difficulty. I want to know what difficulties are made for. I believe difficulties are a special dispensation for Englishmen to get over. They are only intended to add zest to our pursuits. One of the greatest of French writers, Bruyère, said, let the French people thank God for difficulties, for they are the mother of miracles. What are the difficulties of the Temperance Question? If you only handle them with the right sort of glove they won't prick you, and the right sort of glove is that of zeal, earnestness, and love for God and your fellow-man. But I confess there is one difficulty connected with the Temperance Question that I have never yet been able to see my way out of, and that is, I cannot for the life of me understand how it is that Christian men and women can hold themselves aloof from it in the

way they do. (Applause.) When you know for a positive certainty that it is no platform froth, but a fact, that £120,000,000 of money, or more, are spent every year in this country in intoxicating drinks; when you know that 600,000 whole families in this country never knew the meaning of the word home on account of this sin; when you know that 60,000 persons go down every year to a drunkard's grave, that the souls of men are lost, and their bodies brutalised, and wives are murdered, and children starved, and that among the many varied forms of sin by which men are tempted, there is not one that makes as many victims amongst the working class as the sin of drunkenness;—when you know all that I cannot understand why Christian men and women hold aloof from the movement. I venture to say if we lost as many people annually from a railway accident or fever we should have questions asked in the House of Commons about it directly. A few years ago we lost a few thousand head of cattle by a cattle plague;—what was the result? The Archbishop of Canterbury from his throne called the whole nation to humiliation and prayer. Quite right he was to do it; but do we not need a national humiliation now for the souls and bodies of those who are ruined every year? (Applause.) I venture to say, from my experience of this sin of drunkenness, that it has ruined more young men starting in life, it has robbed of their honour more pure women, it has brought down more grey hairs with bitter sorrow to the grave, it has emptied more churches and chapels, and I say it has damned more souls than all the sins of the ten commandments rolled into one. And yet we cannot get Christian men and women to fight in the battle. The clergy, lawyers, and judges know all about it. What the lawyers know, however, is as nothing to what the clergy know. We know the drunkard's miserable home in a moment. We know the pale, careworn look of that sad mother; the squalid, dirty, uncared-for children; and we say it is the home of the drunkard. A lady last week said I spoke of this drink question in very strong language, and she wished I would speak of it with a little more delicacy. I say it is time enough to talk about delicacy when people do not blush to do things that they now blush to talk about. I have no idea of delicacy when in one single year three times as many people are killed by this drunkenness as were killed on both sides in one of England's most bloody battles—the battle of Waterloo. It is time enough to talk about delicacy when we have stopped some of our drink shops. Delicacy! when in two days we spend as much money in drink as we give in the whole twelve months for missionary purposes; and we are a Christian land! Delicacy! when the missionaries write home, and tell us that what they dread above all things is the sight of a white face, because they know the white face will bring the accursed drink with it. When the Archbishop of Bombay writes home, he tells us that in one province in India the same native word is used for both “Christian” and “drink;” and if they see a poor miserable native under the influence of drink, they touch one another and say, “He is becoming a Christian!” Can we dare to hear that, and then speak of the drink with delicacy? No,

I say, let us call a spade a spade. But you may very fairly ask me what we propose as a remedy for this state of things, and say that it is all very well, as anybody can make a destructive speech, and pull a thing to pieces, but that we want a man to point out to us some remedy for this frightful state of things. First of all I will tell you what I am quite sure is not a remedy. I am certain that we shall not do anything by mere apathy and selfishness, and leaving the thing with an "Am-I-my-brother's-keeper?" kind of feeling. Yes, there will come a time—I do not say it to you, because most of you are working in the temperance cause—when to this question there will come the most terrible of answers—"Yes, you are a brother's keeper!" I do not know anything that is more disheartening than to see the apathy and coldness which is shown with regard to this temperance movement, and the feeling that because a man can stop at one or two glasses of wine, he should not interfere with his neighbour who is weaker than himself. I say to those people, "It is very much your own example that is leading that man astray, and you might stretch out your hand and help him if you would." The Convocation of the Province of Canterbury has made some wonderful investigations upon this Temperance Question. Among the answers they got from persons examined before them were some statistics from the governor of one of the largest gaols in England, which were enough to make their hair stand on end, and on being asked what he thought was the best remedy he said, "total abstinence societies, of course; and may God Almighty bless them, and may the clergy never give them the cold shoulder." And in speaking of total abstinence societies, I must say a word about one which has been doing a very good work in England during the last few years—I mean the Good Templars.—(Applause.) At the Berwick-upon-Tweed assizes, which were generally the blackest in the district, not long ago there was a maiden assize, when the sheriff presented the judge with a pair of white gloves, and said he felt bound as an honest man—though no teetotaler himself, to say that the wonderful change in this district was due to the Good Templar movement. (Applause) There are in England alone 270,000 Good Templars. In Great Britain there are three and a half millions pledged to total abstinence. Why are the Good Templars nearly all Nonconformists? Simply and entirely because the Church of England would not take the movement up. My experience of saving the drunkard is this: When you have brought a man to his right senses; when you have encouraged him to cast the demon of alcohol out of his soul; the very first thing that man wants is to go to some place of worship, and what is more natural than that he should go to the place of worship frequented by that person who has been the means of saving him; and if that place of worship has not been the Church of England, how can you be astonished at the man saying all Good Templars are Nonconformists? But we have turned over a new leaf, so don't crow over us. (A laugh.) The Church of England has come forward lately, and the Church of England means it. (Applause.) We have now, thank God, 1,200 clergymen of the Church of England pledged to total abstinence. And that does

not take into account those who are trying it privately without saying anything about it, even to their wives. (Laughter.) What is the great object of these total abstinence societies? The object of them is to wake up the nation. The nation is asleep, from the throne down to the working man, on this temperance matter. We want to wake the nation up to see what a really terrible question this is; that we are being degraded in the sight of continental nations, and are falling from our position as one of the first nations of the world. We want the people to get rid of the idea that they cannot get on without alcoholic drinks. "Take away my beer, and I'm done for—you are going to rob a poor man of his beer." I say we want to prevent the poor man being robbed through his beer. (Applause.) A simple Hindoo who prided himself on never taking life was shown by means of a microscope the life he destroyed in drinking water, and he said, "Take the infernal thing away; you have ruined the whole religion of my life." So we wish to ruin people's religion in drink, by showing them what drink is—to analyse a pint of beer, and show them that it is really a pint of dirty water and nothing else. I didn't say it was not very nice; it is rather nice; but I say it is absolutely worthless as nourishment, and it is your duty to teach the nation these things. George the Fourth, who was very fond of wine, had in his cellar a very fine kind, which the courtiers found out and drank. On a grand occasion the King ordered some of this to be produced, and the courtiers were in a flutter, but they went to an eminent wine merchant, who asked if there was any left, and was told only two bottles, and on tasting it said he made that wine in his back cellar, and could make as much as they wanted, for he had kept the receipt! I want to bring facts like these before the people, and to show them that these alcoholic drinks which the people say are so strengthening and so valuable, are as a rule the merest rubbish, made in the back cellar of some wine merchant. The Bishop said we could not wait for legislation—of course we cannot; we do not mean to wait for it. But at the same time it is well you should notice that we do not know how to use the legislation we have got. Do you know that there are 200 Acts of Parliament regulating the traffic, and every one will be broken to-night before you go to bed? We cannot put the law into operation, because we have not the courage to do it. With regard to the Permissive Bill, I exhort you from the bottom of my heart to go in for it. (Applause.) People talk about it as if it were coercion and tyranny; it is nothing of the kind. Besides, a free country likes coercion. Is not the Education Act coercion—interfering with the liberty of the subject in the case of a man who does not wish to send his boy to school? But the Permissive Bill is not coercive, it is permissive. What has the Parliament to do with it? It is the people who have the real control. If I had a member of Parliament who would not vote for the Permissive Bill, I would never give him another vote. (Applause.) As soon as the people of England are sufficiently alive to see which way their own interest lies they will have a Permissive Bill. There is no public-house on the Shaftesbury Park Estate, but a landlord succeeded in

obtaining a license for a house just on the outside, and I say that is a crying shame which a Permissive Bill would prevent. To my mind the Permissive Bill is the essence of freedom, as it contains within it the principle of self-government. And I do not believe we shall have any permanent relief from this terrible evil until we have got that bill, or some equivalent bill. We cannot expect it with the present Government you know; but by God's blessing we will have it some day. But as the Bishop said, in the meantime we could not wait. I will tell you what we are to do. We are by every means in our power to press voluntary total abstinence upon the people. Why did I become a total abstainer? I saw without doubt that total abstinence was the only cure for the drink system. I went about in my large parish, and did my very best, God knows, to bring the people to a right mind about this matter. But I was not a total abstainer; I did not see my way to it. But after I saw the misery and desolation caused by drink, I saw my way to casting it altogether aside, and the very instant I did so I found the good of it, because I was asking people in fighting down an evil to do something I had done, which I had not been able to do before. The reason why moderate drinkers, if they love the souls of others and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, should become total abstainers, is simply this, that the drunkard, if he is to be saved, must be shielded and aided and encouraged by his stronger brother. Many object to become abstainers because they say the Scriptural argument is all against us. How can they say so? I say the whole spirit of God's blessed book teaches total abstinence—that is, the spirit of total abstinence. King David, after fighting in the heat, called out that he should like some water from Bethlehem. Two or three men drew their swords and fought their way through the Philistines, and brought it to him; but he poured it upon the burning sand, and said, "I cannot drink this, for it is the price of blood." I say is not this the very spirit of total abstinence? I look upon the wine; it may be a harmless creature of God, but it is the price of my brother's blood. It is the price of the souls for whom hell is yawning; and I take my Christian liberty of pouring it upon the burning sands instead of using it. (Applause.) I believe St. Paul was a teetotaler. He was thoroughly consistent, and said he would not drink wine if it made his brother to offend. A friend of mine brought up that old argument about Timothy. He said, "I have got you now; St. Paul advised Timothy to take a little wine for his stomach's sake." There is no doubt he did. Why? Because there was such a rigorous rule of total abstinence amongst them that it required an inspired letter which has been handed down from the Church from all ages, before he could be made to break his pledge. And what is more, I will venture to say that if St. Paul had recommended him to take a little tincture of rhubarb for his stomach's sake I do not believe we should have had 100 millions of money invested in tincture of rhubarb as we have in alcohol. The Bishop said a man had a right to use his Christian liberty when his medical man ordered him to take alcohol. I say a man has as much right to put himself under a doctor as a Catholic has to put himself

under his Pope; but there is yet another alternative, which is to refuse to be under either of them. (Applause.) I say it with the deepest respect for the medical profession—I believe there is no more honourable profession, which does more good, self-denying work; but all the doctors in England would not persuade me to take alcohol, whatever they said about it. When I first became a teetotaler I was subject to the faintings referred to by the Bishop, and people said if I abstained I should soon die; but I didn't. I knew a titled lady, a total abstainer, who went abroad, and accidentally falling down some cathedral steps, sustained a compound fracture of her arm, and the French physician who attended her asked what were her habits of life, and was told she was an abstainer, and he gave it as his opinion, on her recovery, that it was entirely due to her system being free from alcohol. The greatest arguments in favour of the medical side of teetotalism come from the gaol. People go there in all states of health, they are made total abstainers, and there has never been a single case of a man or woman, lad or lass, who has suffered therefrom. Then why don't people become teetotalers? Because the drink is so nice. People get so accustomed to alcoholic drinks that they feel they cannot make the sacrifice. I do not want people to take a half pledge in this matter, but to take a downright teetotal pledge that they won't touch the drink any more. I have got to tell you what the duty of the Church is upon this matter. Didn't our Lord Jesus Christ appoint His Church on earth that it should fight the battle of the cross with vice, sin, and iniquity, in every age? Didn't He enlist every man and woman in this hall to-night into the army, and send them to fight in a battle of which it may be said in those telling words in Ecclesiastes, there is no discharge in that war—no discharge and no truce until the Day of Judgment? Fight, fight, stamp down sin under your feet for the sake of the Captain of your salvation until you die. What is the Christian Church doing that she is not in the fore-front of this movement? Her business is to leaven society by her words, by her example, by her prayers. It is to be always working upon this point, and to be working upon it from a right motive. Oh, that we could make every Good Templar see that! I like the Good Templars, but if they have a fault it is this: that some of them do not sufficiently feel one great motive, which is the glory of Christ. What do I care about the utilitarian side of the Temperance Question? I shall be dead and gone in a year or two and forgotten, and if there is no world to come what does it matter whether we are a little more miserable here or not? I do not take this up on utilitarian grounds merely; I take it up because I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. When Scipio Africanus called for volunteers the whole city turned out. Look at our men in the Crimea, at Balaklava, and Coomassie; wherever an English officer leads, his men are ready to follow. Look at the storming of the Cashmere Gate at Delhi; and that is the sort of spirit to be shown. Is it reasonable or right that the Lord Jesus Christ should be the only Captain who stands out before the world and asks for volunteers, and men should refuse to follow Him? We have four millions

of young children in the Sunday schools of Great Britain. I say that every single one of those ought to be brought up to total abstinence principles. If we are to do anything to the nation we are to do it by leavening the young. Our nation has increased from nine millions to twenty-three millions in one century. That shows you that through the rising generation we must leaven the nation. If there is a Sunday school teacher here who is not an abstainer, I ask him, as one who has had great experience in Sunday schools, to make up his mind to-night that he will be a total abstainer for the sake of the little ones in Christ he is going to lead on. (Applause.) I cannot conclude better than to say this to you: I believe that the work is looked down upon by our risen Saviour as a work especially according to His mind. It is a work that includes self-denial for others. It is a work that brings the soul of man by abstinence to the feet of Christ, and it is a work that must be blest by Him. (Applause.)

Captain KNOX, the governor of Gloucester Gaol, said he came to give them his experience as a soldier, and also as a man who had for five years been connected with our criminal population. As an officer, on retiring from the active service, he came to the conclusion that drink was the curse of the British Army. In India, they found that the drunkards dropped off the soonest. About the time he was leaving the active service the Legislature instituted fines for drunkenness, and in the first three years after those fines were instituted, although from the funds forming those fines £1 was given to each deserving soldier leaving the ranks, no less a sum than £740,000 accumulated. A colonel of a regiment with whom he was acquainted was told by his doctor that he must not have any brandy till five o'clock in the evening, so he kept his watch stopped at that time, in order to have his brandy-and-soda whenever he liked to call for it. (Laughter.) From his own experience of the past few months, he was convinced that nine out of ten of the prisoners who filled our gaols came there from drink. He had himself become a total abstainer that he might say to prisoners, "Drink has brought you here; drink never brought me into trouble; but I have given it up; why don't you?" (Applause.) In order that their prisons might be emptied, he prayed of them to try and further this movement of total abstaining. The way was for every man to sweep clean his own door. He believed many of them could use liquor temperately without being the worse for it; but he did not believe that anyone could without his neighbour being the worse for it. Any man who refrained from being a total abstainer because of the social practice of the country was, in his opinion, a coward. (Applause.)

Mr. S. BOWLY referred to his having been a labourer in this cause for forty years, and he rejoiced at the prospect, which he had almost despaired of at one time, of the Christian Church taking up this question. We could never expect the world to go before the Church in a matter of self-denial. There was no remedy for this terrible evil but total abstinence. All attempts to regulate it had utterly failed.

As to the sacrifice, it did not cost him a fortnight's inconvenience, and he should be ashamed of himself to suppose that his enjoyment of life depended upon what his friend had called "dirty water." He had saved a couple of thousand pounds in wine and beer bills; was that any sacrifice? He was there at seventy-three as able to do his work as he was twenty years ago. Was that any sacrifice? After pointing to other advantages he had derived from the adoption of total abstinence, he pointed to the importance of the principle for society at large. It was time we aroused ourselves to this great question. He felt deeply grateful to their good Bishop and to Mr. Wilberforce for being present that night. What he wished to get rid of was the respectable moderate drinker, and with it fashionable drinking. The influence of evil example was often very wide, and it behoved all to put a good example before the young. Dr. Richardson, in his lectures, showed, on purely scientific grounds, that the moderate use of strong drink was dangerous and injurious. An insurance office, in which 30,000 lives were insured, gave the 10,000 abstainers, who were insured, a bonus of 17 per cent. beyond the other section, comprising the moderate drinkers. If the working classes were all abstainers they might snap their fingers at all our charities. He felt the snow had fallen on his mountain top, and the winter of his life was near. He should not be able long to plead this cause, but he would plead it as long as God should give him life and strength, and when he was gone he hoped to lay his bones among them. He wanted no monument upon his grave. He only wished that some workmen and women, with their little ones, should come and shed a tear of sympathy there, and say, "There lies the man who brought happiness to our home, and joy to our hearts, not only by total abstinence, but by pointing a way to a higher and better life, open to all through the mercy of Christ Jesus our Lord;" and might His blessing fall upon them and their children, and go with them to their homes, and make that meeting a blessing to them all. (Loud applause.)

Mr. SAWYER moved a vote of thanks to the Bishop and to Mr. Wilberforce. (Applause.)—The Rev. J. EMERIS seconded the motion; and it was agreed to amid loud applause.

Rev. Mr. WILBERFORCE briefly acknowledged the compliment, as also did the BISHOP, who remarked: I suppose I have been marked down for some time by you sagacious total abstinence people. (Laughter.) Because I remember, about five or six years ago, when I did not take the deepened and increasingly-serious interest in this question that I now do, I was chosen to be chairman of a temperance meeting in London, and I protested that I would not sail under false colours. But I was carried off and treated with the greatest possible kindness, and I believe I was really the first bishop that occupied what was then rather a ticklish position. (A laugh.) I suppose it is that there is some point of what the opposing interest to us here would call weakness about me; and so I find myself yielding to convictions, telling

people as I yield, finding certain physical facts a hindrance, perhaps only a passing hindrance, for one who has to work, whether well or ill, that requires some consideration. However, when a man has got to that point, and will tell other people so, he is pretty nearly at the bottom of the slope; and so, my dear friends, without saying any more—whether I shall really get to the bottom of the slope I know not myself—this I do know, that with God's blessing, I shall always be perfectly straightforward, and never will I indulge in drinking of any kind for the pleasure of drinking so long as I live, for that I have long and long ago given up. (Applause.) I therefore can address you with great heartiness, with deep interest; and I do humbly hope that some good will come from this meeting. Take one practical thought ere we part. Every one is very much interested. The admirable speech of our friend Mr. Wilberforce, so agreeably sustained with graceful wit, so full of anecdote, has attracted everybody, and here at ten o'clock is a very large room still full of earnest people. Surely we every one of us, whether total abstainers or not, stand pledged to-night; there is no escaping that inference. Some of us have been amused, some of us have been edified, some have been cast into anxious and balancing thoughts; but, at any rate, we all stand pledged to do the best we can in the matter. Every one of us has some influence with some one or other. Now, if in this large meeting each one individually would consider himself in some degree pledged to carry this subject further, first as regards himself, secondly, as regards anyone with whom he may have interest, then this meeting will become that blessing to our city which my venerable friend has prayed God that it should be. I will only add to his words my humble prayer that God's blessing may rest upon this meeting, and that He may please to further and quicken every deeper movement in every Christian heart here present. I thank you most sincerely for your reception of me. (Applause.)—